



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

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February 25, 2008

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Jonathan E. Fielding, M.D., M.P.H. *je fielding ms*
Director and Health Officer

SUBJECT: **7TH STREET WHOLESALE PRODUCE MARKET – COURT CASE
ADJUDICATION**

This memo is to inform you of the recent adjudication of the court case against Alameda Produce Market Inc., owner of the 7th Street Wholesale Produce Market.

On February 14, 2008, the Los Angeles City Attorney's Office reached a settlement agreement with Alameda Produce, Inc., regarding the criminal complaint filed in March 2007, on behalf of the Department of Public Health and the Los Angeles City Department of Building and Safety. The complaint resulted from site inspections which revealed several health code violations including an active vermin (rodent) infestation, poor food handling and storage practices, and inadequate and unsanitary restroom facilities.

Since the initial complaint filing, Department inspectors have implemented a variety of enforcement actions to bring the wholesale market complex into compliance with health codes. These actions have included 23 City Attorney hearings and the successful prosecution of eight individual vendors. The Department's efforts have also resulted in approximately \$600,000 in structural upgrades to the complex, including the construction of two new restrooms, improvements to facility lighting, the implementation of a centralized pest control program and a centralized waste recycling program.

In the settlement agreement, Alameda Produce Market, Inc. entered a No Contest plea to four counts of violation of the Los Angeles County Code and Los Angeles Municipal Code. The company is required to pay the Department of Public Health and Los Angeles City Department of Building and Safety a combined total of \$42,518 for investigative costs and \$6,000 in fines.

Alameda Produce Market, Inc. was also placed on summary probation for 36 months. If similar violations occur during the probation period, the company will be subject to fines and penalties of \$90,000, \$60,000, and \$30,000, for the first 12 months, 13-24 months, and 25-36 months, respectively.

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Finally, Alameda Produce Market, Inc. has agreed to donate \$35,000 to local non-profit organizations, including \$20,000 to the LA's Best after-school program; \$5,000 to Homeboy Industries; and \$10,000 to the East Los Angeles Classic Theater Company.

I will keep you informed of any significant developments in this matter. If you should have any questions in the interim, please let me know.

JEF:ab
PH:702:002(11)

c: Chief Executive Officer
County Counsel
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors